

Statement in Favour of a Motion to Support Scholarship Schemes for Refugees

Forwarded to the Vice-President by Johan Greve Petersen

The Oxford Students Refugee Committee are aiming to contact all the JCR and MCR's at the different colleges, in order to pass motions supporting scholarship schemes for refugees.

The aim of their campaign is to get Oxford to offer scholarship places to refugee students. The University authorities have been very receptive to our ideas so far, and seem willing to back our scheme administratively. Our plan is to get every student (and hopefully every staff member too) at Oxford University to pledge to contribute just £1 a month to fund such a scholarship, by passing motions through every common room. This is a small payment individually, but if every student in Oxford did this, we could in theory cover the living expenses of 20 refugee students annually.

We're limiting the payment to 2 years: We want to get this scheme off the ground, show the university that this is an initiative that the student body feels is important and wants to promote, and prove that if the scholarship is there, then refugees will apply for it. But ultimately we want to send the message that this is something that the wealthy university and alumni should be funding, not people living on a student budget. We'll get the ball rolling, but we don't want the university to feel that it isn't their problem.

As well as passing these motions, the campaign is looking to get word out to potential applicants for these scholarships, and compile the much-needed evidence that the demand is there. In order to do this, we are working with a number of local, national, and international organisations, such as citizensUK, article 26, STAR, universities UK, Kiron, International Students Network UK, NUS, OUSU, Refugee Studies Centre, Asylum Seekers Network, refugee support network, Oxford City of Sanctuary, etc.